

# WinterFest

t w e n t y \* t e n

## WINTERFEST 2010

**GET KITTED** Friday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan. Your chance to hire winter equipment and take advice from the Tiso personal shopper. Meet at Tiso Outdoor Experience Inverness between 12 and 4pm. Come along and let the experts run a pre-WinterFest kit check. This will be the only pre-WinterFest kit check on offer. Remember if your gear is not suitable the guide will not let you join the walk.

**WELCOME DRINKS** Friday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan. Join us at the Bog Cotton Café, Cannich between 6 and 7pm to meet the guides and the other walkers and to ask any last minute questions. N.B. If your kit needs checking, please remember to meet at Tiso Outdoor Experience, Inverness for the *Get Kitted Session*.

**EVENING TALK** "Walking the Planks – on skis in the Scottish Hills" Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> Jan, Marydale Catholic Church Hall, Cannich. Paul Easto is a Director of adventure specialists, Wilderness Scotland and a fanatical advocate of ski-touring in Scotland. Described as "the sport of kings", Paul will share his passion for ski touring in the Scottish hills and beyond. Learn more about the skills, experience and equipment required and why ski touring is the ultimate way to experience Scotland's mountains in winter.

**THE WALKS** All Walks leave from the Bog Cotton Café, Cannich at 8.30am. Low Level Walks depart 9.00am

The following information is intended to provide you with a detailed guideline for each of the walks. However even the best laid plans may have to change due to factors such as weather, conditions underfoot, group fitness etc and that is the beauty of the Scottish winter walking. This works both ways and it may be that conditions are so fantastic that small changes to your day will enhance your experience. This decision will be in the hands of the guide for the particular walk who will ensure that the best experience for the group is gained.

### WS1 Sgurr na Lapaich, 1036m - Winter Skills



For sheer 'in your face' points then the top of Sgurr na Lapaich is favourite walk in Glen Affric. It is the dominating mountain that can be seen from the Affric car park. Winter Skills are the focus for the day and we explore the area below the east facing crags of Sgurr na Lapaich to find the best locations to get out the spikes and look at the snow.

Time and weather permitting there are options to get to the top with stunning views west to An Tudair 1074m, as well as north to Mam Sodhail and Carn Eige.

### HL1 An Tudair, 1074m & Mam Sodhail, 1181m – High Level Munro

This walk really does go the extra mile! The rewards from this strenuous, less frequented route to Mam Sodhail will make this walk one of your all-time Munro highlights. An Tudair is located on the finely defined SE ridge between the Coires

Leachavie and Coulavie. This is a wild place where this beautiful undulating ridge often provides dramatic cornices in winter. We take the stalker's path north of Affric Lodge leading to the foot of Coire Leachavie. Heading NW to round An Tudair Beag we find a route up and onto the An Tudair ridge. From the high vantage point on An Tudair we may see the Winter Skills group to the east on Sgurr na Lapaich. Our route continues NW to join the main Affric ridge from where it is a short climb to the large summit cairn of Mam Sodhail. Conditions allowing we journey on to take in Sgurr na Lapaich and descend the stalker's path to Affric Lodge.

### **LL1 Loch Affric – Low Level Walk**

The Loch Affric Circular Walk takes us on a journey through the ancient Caledonian Forest passing beneath the white topped giants of North Affric. The walking trail on the north of the loch gently undulates as it passes ruins of times gone by; of crofts and sheilings and fleeing princes. We will keep our eyes alert for signs of deer and eagle and marvel at the picturesque location of Affric Lodge and beyond. Once on the Southside we are able to join the route of the drovers just before Strawberry Cottage. Once back along the loch we will be afforded grand views up into the wild Corries of Coulavie and Leachavie a perfect location for photographers as the snow capped peaks are reflected in the loch. We may even be able to watch the progress of the other walks as they traverse the high tops before all return for the evening talks.



### **WS2 Tol Creagach, 1053m with Mountain Rescue - Winter Skills**

Today you will be in the safe hands of the Torridon Mountain Rescue team. Building on the Winter Skills gained on WS1, you get the rare opportunity to learn hands-on from the experts. Using different scenarios, you will learn about search techniques and the use of transceivers; how to deal with a winter casualty and report an incident. You may even have the chance to see a search and rescue dog team at work. And to top it all you get the opportunity to climb another Munro!

### **HL2 Mullach Fraoch-choire, 1102m - High Level Munro**

When you look south from the North Affric Munros there is a hill that demands the eye – Mullach Fraoch-choire. Not usually ascended from the north, Mullach Fraoch-choire sits at the northern end of an 8km-long ridge between Loch Cluanie and Glen Affric. From the west end of Loch Affric, we continue along the track turning south into Gleann na Ciche. Our route then heads SW to join one of the main ridges bordering Fraoch-choire and leading to the fine summit of Mullach Fraoch-choire.

### **LL2 Tomich Trail Low level walk.**

It's not all about high places. Starting in the historic Victorian village of Tomich, the walk heads up to the hill lochs above the village and the Tomich monument to Lady Tweedmouth with superb panoramic views across to Glen Affric. We then head across country via the Guisachan Estate to visit the Gladstone Pine planted by the PM himself before a stop off at the spectacular Plodda Falls. Forest trails bring us back to Tomich for a welcome cup of tea.



**LL3 NIGHT WALK** lit with Glo Sticks. Family Walk (*non guided*) £Free Follow the Glo Sticks on an enchanted circular walk around Plodda Falls. Listen out for faeries and gaze at the stars before returning back to the start. This walk is non guided and all participants must carry torches and wear suitable clothing. In partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland.

### **HL3 Guest Glen - Ciste Dhubh, 979m, Am Bathach, 798m – High Level Munro**

An early start allows us to commute to this year's Guest Glen – Glen Sheil. Starting at the Cluanie Inn, on the shores of Loch Cluanie, our sights are aimed at Ciste Dhubh and Am Bathach. Ciste Dhubh rises from Bealach a' Choinich via a fine arête to a rocky summit about 5km north of Loch Cluanie. The finely featured route to the top alone makes for an amazing end to Winterfest 2010, but to cap a great few days we intend to descend back to the welcoming environment of the Cluanie Inn via the beautiful ridge of Am Bathach.

### **Detail**

Preparation is the key to enjoyment, so please take a few minutes to read the following WinterFest 2010 notes. If you need to know a little more then please don't hesitate to contact us on 01456 415379

## Walk Gradings

Winterfest 2010 is a walking event that takes place in a mountainous environment, in winter conditions, in Scotland. With this in mind for all walks you need to be prepared for the liveliest of winter weather hoping that the day will be sublime.



The high level walks are aimed at people that are used to the mountain environment in a 'summer' condition wanting to progress to winter and as such will have a reasonable level of fitness. The walks will be visiting wild places and will not necessarily follow footpaths. Conditions underfoot, coupled with the terrain, dictate that these walks are of a medium to strenuous nature.

Winter skills may involve ice axe arrests, movement on snow and ice and the assessment of snow conditions. However there is no obligation for you to undertake any of the winter skills, although a great deal of fun can be had in practicing these valuable winter skills. These activities involve a degree of physical input and as such any aches, pains weaknesses or concerns need to be advised to the guide at

the start of the day and to NHG before the WinterFest.

Low level walks will follow estate roads and footpaths with easy height gain but a reasonable level of fitness is still required.

## Equipment

The organisers reserve the right to refuse entry on to a walk if your equipment is not up to standard or sufficient. Please visit our website for a detailed equipment list. If you are not able to join a walk, no refund will be offered, although an alternative lower level walk may be offered subject to availability. You must join us at Tiso Inverness from 12-4pm on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January to hire any additional equipment you may need at special reduced WinterFest rates and to have your boots, crampons etc. Checked by the WinterFest guides. A Tiso personal shopper will also be available for advice. If you are at all unsure about your equipment, please make sure you come along to Tiso Inverness between 12 and 4pm on the Friday.



## Transport

Wherever possible we strive to reduce the environmental impact of activities within the NNR. This includes travelling to and from Glen Affric. Transportation to and from the walks will be in car convoy. If you don't have transportation or are able to offer shared lifts to others then please contact Gina Francis in advance.

Transportation to and from the walks is not provided. However if you can offer shared lifts to other walkers, please call Gina in advance to let her know on 01456 415379. Wherever possible we would like to reduce the environmental impact of cars entering the NNR.

Glen Affric is less than 30 miles south-west of Inverness and is easily accessible by the A831 road, which links from A82 (Fort William – Inverness) and the A862 (Beaulieu – Inverness). Rail links at Inverness or Beaulieu, timetables and fares at [www.firstgroup.com](http://www.firstgroup.com) or [www.gner.co.uk](http://www.gner.co.uk). For local Buses from Inverness, Beaulieu and Drumadrochit visit [www.rapsons.co.uk](http://www.rapsons.co.uk).

## Recommended Maps

OS Landranger 25 & 26

## Charges and Bookings

All walks need to be booked in advance. Where a walk is either over or under subscribed the organisers reserve the right to transfer your booking. By completing the booking form, walkers agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the WinterFest. Please note that all walks are subject to appropriate conditions on the day and may be subject to change at short notice.



Please note that no refunds will be made once your booking form has been received.

## Cancellation

If the Festival fails to attract sufficient interest, all monies paid to the organisers will be refunded in full. Notice will be given of cancellation 21 days prior to the start of the WinterFest. Accommodation bookings or transport tickets will not be taken into consideration for refunds by the organisers.

If you decide to cancel your booking, you must notify the organisers as soon as possible and confirm this in writing. No refunds will be offered.

## Liability

Activities in the outdoors are potentially hazardous by their very nature. Individual participants in the WinterFest must, therefore, accept that they take part at their own risk. The organisers and sponsoring bodies cannot accept liability for any death, injury, loss or damage suffered during the WinterFest. Nor can they accept any responsibility for any loss of expense to the clients from any cause beyond our control. All walkers are responsible for their own safety and understand that they are responsible for providing adequate insurance cover for the activities undertaken.

As organisers, Natural High Guiding wish to ensure that everyone enjoys these varied walks and that walkers are well prepared. For your own safety and enjoyment, please ensure that you abide by the recommendations set out for each individual walk. Any relevant medical conditions must be notified to the group leader in advance of the walk. In particular, if you need to take any medication, please ensure your guide is aware of this in advance of the walk and that you carry it with you at all times.

Please observe the Scottish Outdoor Access Code at all times and be aware that you are walking within a National Nature Reserve.

## Accommodation & Services



Strathglass offers the full range of accommodation from hotels, B&B, guest houses, caravan & camping, hostels and self catering. For a full list of providers, please visit the WinterFest website or [www.glenaffric.info](http://www.glenaffric.info). Great café in Cannich, plus well stocked Spar shop and local pubs.

## Food

You must supply your own packed lunches, snacks and drinks for all walks. Please note that the WinterFest operates a leave no trace policy. You will be expected to take out everything you bring in from packaging to fruit skins, apple cores, tissues and toilet paper.

WinterFest breakfast is available from the Bog Cotton Café at 8am. Packed lunches are also available. Breakfast and packed lunches must be ordered in advance by calling Fay on 01456 415364

## Guides

All guides are specialists in their own field. As well as ensuring that the correct routes are followed, they will provide you with interesting information about the landscape, flora, fauna, geology and local heritage of the area. All guides are very experienced in the winter environment.

All high level walks are guided by professional mountain guides with all the appropriate qualifications and experience. The mountain guides will carry first aid and safety equipment at all times.

Your guide reserves the right to refuse you entry on to the walk if you are deemed to be ill equipped or not physically fit. Likewise, if your guide believes that you are placing yourself or the group at risk by your actions, they reserve the right to remove you from the walk. In adverse weather conditions, guides will decide on the appropriate course of action, which may include abandoning the walk or altering the route. Their decision is final and in all of the above circumstances, no refund will be given.

